



For Immediate Release  
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## **EPA Symposium Examines Risk Assessment Tools Used to Protect Human Health and Environment**

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Research Triangle Park, NC.....When an environmental problem is identified, scientists need to determine what the risks may be to humans or the environment. Measurement tools or indicators to determine the quality of water, air, food and natural resources are necessary to make risk assessments and help environmental managers decide what to do when there is a potential environmental threat.

The science of developing indicators is the focus of the 5<sup>th</sup> National Health and Environmental Effects Research Laboratory Symposium, June 6-8, at the Sheraton Imperial Conference Center in Research Triangle Park, NC. The symposium, entitled "Indicators in Health and Ecological Risk Assessment," will be attended by scientists, risk assessors, resource managers and public health officials.

Six interactive sessions on pressing environmental problems such as ozone, global warming and harmful algal blooms will address the current status of these risk assessment tools. Over 50 presentations by leading scientists from universities, national research centers, government agencies and other organizations will be held on efforts to advance the science of indicator development to address ways to ensure clean drinking water, clean air and sustainable ecosystems. The session topics are: Persistent Bioaccumulating Toxicants; Endocrine Disrupting Chemicals; Ambient Ozone; Global Atmospheric Change; Harmful Algal Blooms and Coastal Ecosystem Integrity.

Pollution or other stressors often impact both humans and sensitive environmental resources, yet risk assessment tools have historically been developed separately. There is a growing international effort to integrate human and environmental risk assessment to better understand the effects of pollutants and other stressors such as urban development from a more holistic viewpoint. The symposium will examine the efficacy and scientific basis for current indicators and explore common elements among indicators for human and environmental risk assessment.

The symposium provides an opportunity for those developing the measurement tools and those using them to work together on improving indicators for resource and public health management. Bill Fisher, Ph.D., chairman of the symposium organizing committee states that "We designed the symposium to be as interactive as possible. We'll roll up our shirt sleeves and try to find ways to make our indicators work better and be more scientifically defensible."

For additional information on the symposium or to register, contact Anne Barnes Miller, U.S. EPA, National Health and Environmental Effects Research Laboratory, 919-541-0328.

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